The Commonweal

April 18, 1947

Desert Journey

Anne Fremantle

Supreme Court Oversight

Edward J. Heffron

VOLUME XLVI 15c NUMBER 1

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Next Week

MUST THERE BE BUT ONE FORM OF DEMOCRACY? by Dorothy Thompson, is a searching examination of the German problem now under debate at Moscow by a leading American political commentator. Years of first-hand experience and concern witth Germany, have convinced Miss Thompson that any attempt by the Big Four to set up a new Weimar Republic would be doomed to failure. Unpopular as her conclusions may be in certain circles, they are thoroughly substantiated in this timely article. Miss Thompson suggests that the Germans need a different brand of political democracy from that obtaining in the United States or Britain or France. And if it has a more authoritarian complexion than Americans want for themselves, there will be a better chance of its working as it corresponds to the German political character.

CENSORSHIP IN JAPAN, by Paul Vincent Miller, deals at firsthand with a difficulty not sufficiently realized by the American people. It is, however, a subject which much engages General MacArthur, and will have much to do with the success or failure of our Japanese occupation.

LOFTY IRELAND, DARKLY SUNG, by Elizabeth Johnson, tells of the poetry of Erin down through the centuries and particularly of the new volume "1,000 Years of Irish Poetry."

[Week After Next: Spring Book Number]

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The
COMMONWEAL

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The Truman Doctrine

WHAT we are now witnessing might be described as the implementation pains of Mr. Truman's re-direction of America's foreign policy. What the President originally stated, as we have pointed out before, was really a general principle, with a very broad suggestion for the translating of that principle into action. In a thoroughly healthy way, public opinion at once reacted with all sorts and shades of opposition, criticism and suggested modification. It now begins to be within the range of legitimate hope that we shall get a fairly decent implementation of something which could just as easily have turned out badly. While there is little ground for sympathizing with the outraged screams of those who describe the whole business as a jettisoning of the United Nations—obviously the line most pleasing to Moscow — it was earnestly to be desired that UN enter into the picture of our policy. That body, it cannot be too frequently repeated, is by definition incapable of handling any problem where the veto can be used purely for purposes of obstruction. The modified Vandenberg proposal, as unanimously approved by the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, admirably takes care of this difficulty, by placing it within the power of the Security Council—the United States foregoing its veto right in this specific matter—to require our withdrawal, subject to the UN's being able to fill the vacuum which we, in that case, would leave. Other developments are likewise to the good, especially our assurance that we shall not send any mission to Turkey. Meanwhile, of course, Mr. Gromyko has said his say, though the wind was taken a bit out of his sails by the committee acceptance of the Vandenberg proposal only a few days before he spoke.

As was to be expected, the suggestion has been made that our activities in Greece should be contingent upon a change in the Greek Government. And this suggestion has emanated precisely from people who would scream the loudest were the shoe on the other foot—had we, for instance, suggested any such strings being tied to the British Loan. No, that is certainly not the way in which to avoid harnessing imperialism to the Truman Doctrine. Of course we should do all we can to help in the eventual de-lousing of such governments as the present Greek Government, but only by persuasion, never by main force. Surely that lesson we should have learned pretty thoroughly from what we tried to do and utterly failed to do in Argentina.

"A Great Test"

ALTHOUGH the War Department has been pressing recently for universal peacetime military service of six months duration, the armed services appear to be engaged in an honest trial of the voluntary enlistment system. Relations between Naval Reserve, Organized Reserves and the New National Guard are thorny, but give testimony to the scope of the additional effort to back up the regular services by sizable groups trained for vital "home defense." The Marine Corps also has in readiness twenty-five recruiting teams scheduled to visit five hundred American colleges to enlist reserve officer candidates for summer training. April 7 to April 12 has been widely observed with parades and demonstrations as Army Week. Press and radio continue to stress technical training for national service.

A sizable armed force obviously is required by present international commitments; it will continue to be necessary for some years. The dangers of militarism are greatly lessened if the basis is voluntary. A powerful volunteer force also serves as a warning of the extent to which the American people believe in their national ideals. In the present state of the world adequate national preparedness of a non-militant sort greatly lessens the likelihood of war. General Eisenhower is right that "we are engaged in a great test," in seeking to build up an adequate force in peacetime by traditionally American methods.

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Anschluss: 1947

EARLY this winter, when the program for the Moscow conference was being drawn up, the great nations of the earth announced, as courteously as they could, that, although they would like to have all the well-behaved small nations join them for talks on the German trouble, they really did not see how it would be possible to make a place for everybody at the conference table. Small nations, the great powers implied, are like small boys—a nuisance at a grownup gathering, even when the small boys have behind them a record of dependable performance. A few months ago, some of the smaller nations considered that arrangement scandalous, but lately they seem more at peace with the large power notion of their usefulness, and some of them — the Netherlands, Belgium and Luxembourg, particularly—have given signs not only of settling comfortably into their necessary positions on the international power list, but appear, even, to have made the kind of progress toward an improved Europe that the prime movers in Moscow are supposed to be making.

While the great powers have been holding one another off with an exchange of views and barbs, the governments of the Netherlands, Belgium and Luxembourg have been going modestly ahead with their plan for a three-way customs union. Recently, the parliaments of those three countries simultaneously took up the discussion of bills which, if approved, will make a customs union between their countries a fact. The fulfilled object of the customs union calls for complete economic union between the Netherlands, Belgium and Luxembourg, and the steps by which they mean to bring it about include: a mutual abolition of import duties, a joint tariff schedule against other countries, and a general equalization of tax systems, prices, and wages. In addition, there will be regulated agreement on production, with each country turning out the kind and amount of goods most suited to the domestic and foreign benefit of the union members.

The three small, brave nations have not set themselves an easy problem. The brand of economic regulation they have in mind would be difficult to bring about in the territory of even the smallest and most easily implemented member of their union—Luxembourg. And no matter how convinced are the members of the three parliaments, it is hard to believe that the farmers and tradesmen they represent are all out for the union; or even if they are, that their enthusiasm will stand fresh and firm against the clammy bureaucratic touch that is bound to enter their lives in the name of that union. But the ruling bodies of the Netherlands, Belgium and Luxembourg undoubtedly know all that. And they seem, also, to know a few other things: that if the racked economic body of Europe is to become sound again there must be a thought-out plan for the distribution of the goods of Europe for all Europeans; and that it is best, for now, to start that idea going in a small way, in the corners of Europe that join most naturally and easily. It may, after all, be one of the functions of the large powers to Indian-wrestle in their various capitals while the small nations take the sensible, obvious ways at home.

The Soft Coal Crisis

THE continuing plight of the nation's soft coal miners tends to be further obscured by the week's developments resulting from the Centralia disaster. The Government's closing of 518 of the mines it operates as unsafe was a necessary emergency step—as is the provision that any application for reopening must include the approval of the Mine Workers' local safety committee. But the big headlines had to do with John L.'s continuing gunning for Secretary Krug, the failure of three-quarters of the miners to return to work right after Easter. More and more disturbing facts came to light about Centralia and the de-tracking of Illinois mine inspectors to the job of collecting election funds from mine owners. One day Mr. Lewis called for a "rule of reason" to determine which mines should continue to operate, another he demanded the closing of all but two of the nation's soft coal mines (he demanded that federal inspectors — of whom there are only 175—certify each of the 2,516 mines before it be permitted to reopen, whereas the Government called for certification of unclosed mines by the union's local safety committee). Faced with so much political jockeying and the prospect of a severe industrial shutdown, the sympathies of the American people are veering away from the coal miners.

The opportunity for necessary legislation, for taking mine inspection out of politics and securing effective collaboration between state and federal enforcing authorities is passing. Yet the fact that in the *best* safety year on record, 1945, some 1,086 American coal miners were killed on the job and 50,500 were injured still is foremost.

"The Middle Ages"

CERTAINLY one of the most startling cultural phenomena of the moment is the current openness of mind in America regarding religion. It would be very dangerous to generalize sweepingly on this subject, since the attitude of the great bulk of Americans probably remains substantially the same as it has been for the past generation. But it may safely be said that a certain élite in this country, which a few years ago was distinguished for its yawning indifference if not for its positive antipathy to religious ideas, has suddenly suffered a sea-change. Particularly

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striking because of its high visibility is the open manifestation of this change in the *Time-Life-Fortune* publications. It is, of course, true that these magazines have not changed suddenly. The wind began to blow in the present direction five or six years ago, with editorials in *Life* on the need for theology and with Jacques Maritain a featured contributor to *Fortune*.

Life's recent splurges on the Renaissance and the Middle Ages represent some sort of climax in the shifting attitude toward orthodox Christianity. The Renaissance piece, published March 3, was extraordinary in that it singled out an Italian churchman who was likewise a pope as its hero; among English-speaking people this is quite contrary to tradition, which is likely to favor for its Renaissance heroes men in revolt against the Church. Though no more extraordinary, the current article on the Middle Ages (April 7) is even more conspicuous by virtue of its almost total sympathy for Medieval Christianity and its amazing exaltation both of Saint Thomas and of Dante. Even more jolting is the editorial in the same issue, which is an outright appeal for mysticism in religion, including such flat statements as: "Religion is *not* the 'brotherhood of man.'" ". . . no code of ethics is an adequate substitute for religion." "It was Christ himself who, by dying and not dying, revealed to believers the unity of the two worlds which we celebrate at Easter." While all this was obviously not written by a Catholic, it comes so perilously close to Catholicism that we are indeed left wondering. And since the whole business is clearly motivated by good will, Catholics should consider all this writing with special care; for it can do a great deal to enlighten them, especially with regard to an intellectual revolution which makes the basic teachings of Christianity more attractive than they have been in many generations.

At the same time, this greater attractiveness makes the failings of Christians even more repulsive.

The Puccini Deal

OF COURSE IF it were to be the black pest all over the world, the moon, the sun, the stars going out into blackness, or only small trouble like an atomic war, no one would care what is happening now to the copyright recently held by the Italian firm of Ricordi on the operas written by Giacomo Puccini. What is happening is that the Alien Property Custodian is making, or has made a contract with Mr. Milton Shubert, nephew of Lee and J. J. Shubert, the people who run theaters, whereby Mr. Shubert acquires the right to use material from Puccini's operas for purposes — amusement purposes — of his own. This contract or sale has been possible because the Milan Ricordi firm has an American Ricordi firm which is a subsidiary, and when we were at war with Italy we seized the properties of the American subsidiary and since we are not at peace with Italy we now are selling these properties. If it were to be now the end of the world, no one would care about this transaction but we still have the sun in the morning and the moon at night (infringement of copyright "Annie Get Your Gun") and we must proceed on the assumption that we still for some time will have serious musical scores that should not be tampered with.

We do not know what Mr. Shubert plans to do with the Puccini scores but surely he did not buy them to play them on his piano. We think we can guess what he bought them for.

Mimi Sears is a nice girl who has a sister Eileen as a chaperone. She lives in Greenwich Village and she is engaged to a poet who has no money but he has a friend with whom he went to college and this friend pawns a Stutz Bear Cat car when Mimi needs the doctor. In the same house in the Village lives a Japanese girl who never liked the Japanese Emperor and then the war comes and she works in the OWI. While in that office she is jilted by the Section Head and this happens at the same time that Miss Sears comes to the conclusion that you cannot live on poetry alone and goes away and leaves her poet fiancé. In this same house in the Village there is a young Italian American called James Puccini who wants to be a composer. He is everybody's friend and in real life he arranges it so that Rudolph (of German extraction) is waiting outside Bellevue with a brand new Lincoln when Mimi comes out cured after an operation on her tonsils, and it is this same James who tells the OWI man that he will report him to Bob Sherwood if he does not marry, as pledged, the Japanese girl who hates the Emperor. James Puccini hears these people talking about their troubles and when they talk it is music to his ears. So he writes down the music and a man paid by Mr. Shubert orchestrates this music for James and now it is in a theater and you see Mimi in real life and everything is happy in the end but you also see the operas James has made out of this material and you do not mind their ending so sadly because that is only what James did with them in the operas because operas must always be sad. Then James goes to Naples with Mr. and Mrs. Caruso and on the boat to Capri meets a girl from the Golden West and he says I shall go back to America for I have never seen the Grand Canyon and so there will be another opera for Mr. Shubert to ruin when he catches up with that later period in my life.

We are spending money to restore the ruined monuments in Italy; we say that there are wonderful things in Italy that belong to the Italians but also belong to the world and to us. But we do not mean that they "belong" to us or to the Alien Property Custodian—to sell and ruin.

C. G. PAULDING.

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Desert Journey

Anne Fremantle

NEXT TO ME at the table in the dining saloon of the Casablanca-bound steamer was a quiet man, fortyish, in black suit and tie, with an Irish face and a New England accent. He was, I learnt, Brother Garnier of the White Fathers of Africa. He had spent six years in Uganda, helping to organize 3500 Poles, whom the Russians had first deported to Siberia. The British had begged for them, and they had been allowed to come, with many spinning wheels, but little else for luggage. Native labor, directed by Brother Garnier and an English colleague, had built houses, and the refugees had soon become self-supporting, making all their clothes, including their shoes, growing their food, and needing no help other than the initial capital and the surveillance of their hosts. At the war's end they could all have gone home; only a few chose to, and these got cold feet when they reached the coast, and dribbled back to the community. Brother Garnier had fallen ill, and had been sent home, to Boston. It was twenty years since he had seen his family. "My sister was seven when I went away; now she has four children. I did not recognize her, nor she me. I shall never see any of them again," he added, "our rules do not allow it."

In the train, as we crawled through the bare, stony hills between the turret-walled city of Fez, and Oujda, the Moroccan frontier, I asked the White Father in my carriage if this were not the desert? "Good gracious, no," he laughed, "all this is cultivated land. It's ploughed — or scratched—at least two inches deep. In spring, you see green here." He was a Belgian Father, returning "home" to the mother house at Maison Carrée, outside Algiers, after ten years in the Belgian Congo. "We have a wonderful harvest there," he told me, "already we have native priests, and nuns, and a tremendous number of catechumens." "And here," I asked, "in Muslim countries, how do you prosper?" He sadly shook his head. "No conversions," he replied, "or almost none. And wherever Islam comes, it is the same. The baptized pagans make wonderful Christians, but once they are touched by Islam, their souls seem to shrivel, and there is nothing doing. It's a race between Crescent and Cross throughout Africa."

At Oujda, a clean, shiny new French town, with wide boulevards, palm-planted, the hotels were all full. After being turned away from the fifth, I went to the church, and a huge, bearded Franciscan Father interceded for me with the Superior of the Sisters of Christian Doctrine. She took me in, and gave me a bed in the infirmary. The Sisters, who had housed British officers during the occupation, told me there had been no bombing or fighting, but much small damage—so many holes in the parlor wall that the sisters had painted them over with jazzy bands of different colors, with birds and mottoes—and all the foot-baths, the convent's pride and joy, had been yanked out and scattered. "Ces Miss," as the sisters called the ATS, had been, perhaps sometimes, not quite ladylike "but of course the conditions were difficult," they added, smiling kindly. Next morning was Candlemas, and the courtyard was full of little twittering girls, come on foot or on bicycles, clutching the candles they had brought to have blessed. "We have 200 children, and have to turn many away, for lack of accommodation," I was told. Oujda is on the edge of a big mining district, and the nun's children were all French, the children of concessionaires or engineers or overseers. So far, no attempt had been made to educate the Arab girls, though the nuns hoped that might come later.

At Maison Carrée the White Fathers were assembling in force for their annual retreat. About seven miles outside the city, set on the sea's edge, the monastery is built Arab-wise, round a big garden, with cool colonnades. Hibiscus and mimosa were in flower; lemon trees in full fruit grew amongst the neat rows of vegetables. Like the Oratorians, the White Fathers live in community but keep each their own small belongings; they pay for their own habits, laundry and notepaper, and all the money they are given is allocated to their mission-work. In the big reception-room, which is also a museum, were two bishops, the Superior-General, and an old French-Canadian, who had just flown in from the Gold Coast. He had spent fifty years in Nigeria. His first journey from the coast to the interior had taken him a year; his plane had taken less than two days to cover the same ground. "I have just ordained priest the son of the first native child I baptized," he said. "But already even the Christians want us to go—they want to govern themselves, to run their own country. I think they are right, fundamentally. It's our aim, as religious, to give them a native episcopate, and an entirely native priesthood; we should not be

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surprised if they should desire also their own political institutions." He was old: his parchment-white face was unlined, his body straight and sturdy.

Maison Carrée was full of memories of the great Cardinal Lavigerie, who, in the grim famines of the eighteen-sixties, had collected hundreds of abandoned and starving Arab children, and had fed and clothed and educated them, and when the then French Government had tried to take them from him, had refused to give them up. Instead he had bought land and had founded two villages, in the valley of Cheitif: St. Cyprien of the Attafs, and St. Monica, where the grandchildren and great-grandchildren of the Cardinal's starvelings still live. The Cardinal's counsels on the attitude and behavior of the White Fathers towards the natives are still their rule and guide, and are as apposite today as eighty years ago. He saw no sense in attempting swift conversions, and he entirely disapproved the baptism of infants, other than those *in articulo mortis*. "Nothing," he declared, "hinders the Christianization of a country as much as apostasy and apostates." The White Fathers dress like the natives, and live as much as possible like them, and must show by their lives that all men are brothers in Christ. Schools, hospitals, farms, these are the outward forms, he declared, should be taken by the corporal works of mercy. And the Arabs are without either gratitude or illusions. "Yes, we make use of the White Fathers," one declared to me, "because we know that to tell them anything is to tell it to a tomb. But afterwards, we drive them out."

★

The poverty of the Arabs is unbelievable. The White Sisters at El Golea took me to an Arab wedding. The bride was well-to-do, for her father was the hospital orderly; her bridegroom a truckdriver for the Transaharian Transport. She had seventeen colored silk veils draped over her thin gold crown (all, she assured me bought in the Black Market). But she and all her family (including an indeterminate number of small children) lived in two mud-floored rooms, carpet-spread for the reception, but without any furniture save bedding and kitchen utensils. There is an absence of possessions which makes European or American poverty look amateurish—to own nothing but what you stand up in means two entirely different things when "what" comprises shoes and a suit, or one ragged cloth, between you and the cold. Yet even the poverty of the local Algerian French is startling. The White Sisters, for example, with whom I stayed in the Kasbah, the old Arab quarter of Algiers, live in a most beautiful old house with big cool rooms that once belonged to a Pasha. To the high, white-washed chapel, a White Father comes each morning on his bicycle to say Mass, and the ten White Sisters say their beads in Arabic. The Sisters distribute bread daily (the ration is 250 grams per European, 100 to 150 per Arab—when they can afford or get it) and have as little as their neighbors. No milk, butter, cheese, meat, fish, rice, macaroni, sugar, jam, or honey. Olives are rationed; dates are 120 francs a kilo, and the average Arab earns 60 francs a day. The Sisters manage to feed their 300 girl pupils once a day on cousous (a sort of cream-of-wheat made with semolina, and spiced) and some vegetables (beetroot, fennel, salads)—no oil. But clothing is really short and they are at their wits end to dress the children, most of whom are very literally in rags (and it is cold in winter in Algiers: there was frost in February most mornings, and at Christmas it snowed). They begged for lengths of colored cotton material, which the girls could make up into clothes, and for cotton to sew with. As for accessories, such as paper and string, these quite simply do not exist: for a small piece to do up a tiny parcel I had to go to the British Consulate—nowhere else in all Algiers was any to be had for love or money. If a cup or jug is broken today, it is an almost irremediable calamity. Wool, once a great native industry, is severely rationed, for several years of drought, and the Vichy government's policy of sending to Paris all that the Germans demanded of them, have reduced to minute proportions those flocks which once were the whole capital of the desert Arabs. These have for several years now been crowding into the cities; few nomads are left, and almost the whole population of the Territoires du Sud (the Sahara proper) is on the verge of actual starvation. The charity, both of Christian and Muslim, does its best, but it cannot reach a hundredth part of the prevailing misery.

At Laghoua, the first of the South Algerian oases, the White Sisters run a small hospital. Each morning the seven of them attend to 700 and more out-patients: in the tiny dispensary these crowd so closely against the Sisters that each evening they de-louse themselves with difficulty. Typhus is endemic; each afternoon the Sisters drive in an old car into the villages and give injections: they have an isolation ward, but the patients get bored, and stravage into the other wards. It is rare to see a baby over a year old with two eyes; infectious trachoma or gonorrhea ravage even the children. Both are contagious, and as the women pass the family stick of kohl from eye to eye, every individual is inevitably infected, and if the infected eye is not treated with argyrol drops within twenty-four hours, its loss is certain. *"Du temps des Américains"* there were sulphur drugs to be had, and even penicillin; now there are only the bottles remaining, filled

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again with the old French *"calmants"*; orange flower syrup, and steeped gentian flowers, intusions of camomile and verbena; for disinfectants, crude iodine and carbolic. Impossible to isolate the patients—they will not even stay in bed, but squat amongst rags on the floor, bundled brats beside them, and a covey of relatives brewing mint-tea around. At least in their hospital the Sisters have iron bedsteads with clean mattresses! In the civil hospital at Djelfa, into which I peeked, one filthy Arab orderly watched over two sour-smelling, unswept rooms, each with four groggy beds, from whose split sackcloth mattresses soiled straw and dusty leaves escaped.

In their convents the Sisters teach the Arab girls the local arts—spinning, weaving and embroidery, as well as knitting and sewing. They also teach cooking, child-care, hygiene, elementary first-aid, and some notions of the care of domestic animals and of horticulture. In Kabylie, the mountainous district between Algiers and Constantine, where some two million Berbers live in tiny villages that cling like bees' nests to the high rocks, some of the best woolen carpets in the world are made with century-old geometric designs on black and white or beige and white (no direct representation of any living creature is allowed in Islam, lest it lead to polytheism, the deadliest of all sins). The littler girls spin, not with the wheel but the distaff; at eleven they begin to weave, and follow with strange skill the intricate patterns in neutral tones, or in the blazing reds and yellows, blues and greens of the M'zabite colors (all natural dyes) as perfectly as in the simpler Kabyle colors. All girls trained by the Sisters are highly prized as wives: the Mother Superior at Ghardaia told me with a proud twinkle "We make our own conditions when we marry our little girls; we don't let them marry before thirteen or fourteen (most Arab girls are married by eight or ten) and we try to let them go only to good homes. We welcome them back as visitors or workers even after they are married, and they mostly like to return to us."

The Sisters' courtyard, in every town or village where they are, is always a great meeting place for the women, who, veils flung off, play with their babies; these totter around, on experimental legs. The women nurse their children until two or three, and carry them in their arms, both customs encouraged by the Sisters, for, once weaned, there is no other milk, and once allowed to walk, the babies eat and breathe and rub the filthy dust into eyes and mouth and open sores.

At El Coles there is a Christian village of stone, barrack-like buildings, put up by the French Government and people for the illegitimate offspring of French officers and men. The Sisters were asked to undertake the care of these children, whose mothers, abandoned, had no other resource save the oldest profession. Now there are some forty or more Christian families, raised by the Sisters and the Fathers, all of whom have remained steadfastly true to their faith. These half-breeds have crowds of children, who are, in general, more intelligent and better looking than their legitimate compatriots. With Latin acceptance of the facts of life, there is no sham or secrecy attached to this village or to its inhabitants.

There are over three thousand White Fathers, all of whom are either in the mission field in Africa, or are training to go there. They suffered horridly from the war. All their German, Czech and Austrian novitiates were closed, the buildings confiscated, the postulants and the priests scattered. The African fathers could not even communicate with them, and the supply of funds to the motherhouse ceased. Luckily, American and Canadian generosity stepped nobly into the breach, but now the European houses must be built up again, and at a heavy price.

Yet what is most lacking are Sisters. Some were killed in the war. A fully qualified woman doctor, and a chemist, as well as other less specialized were killed in the bombardment of Algiers, and of the gallant Canadian Sisters, the only ones to be recruited during the war years, several have had to be sent home, unable to endure the African climate, so differently violent from their own. Nor can it be hoped that the vocations now ripening in Europe will have the requisite physical tenacity. French, Belgian, Italian and English girls have been too undernourished for too long to stand up to the life of the African Apostolate. Yet it is an ideally healthy life for the strong, in a sun-drenched air that, given simple cleanliness, is wonderfully germicidal.

★

As the White Father's novitiates are all out of Africa, so too, I found when I reached France, the Sisters of Jesus — one of the two embryo orders living in the spirit of Father de Foucauld (the greatest of all Saharan characters) preparing themselves for work in Africa, at Aix en Provence. Sister Magdalen, in charge of the novices, explained that the Sisters are both active and contemplative. They have already a house in the desert near Gerryville, close to Beni Abbès, Father de Foucauld's first hermitage, and this is supported by the work of the Aix house. The Aix Sisters work in factories, or on the farms, hiring themselves out to the farmers, and they also take in piecework. They live in absolute poverty, and moreover must never take meat or coffee or wine, and must live like the natives. They must renounce their native language, their European customs, must live as intimately as possible with Muslim families, nursing them, learning to work,

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and rendering all the services friendship can suggest. They must possess neither *"dots* nor *rentes,"* but must earn their bread as Jesus did during His hidden earthly life. They must never be called Reverend Mothers, but rather must seek to be "little sisters of nothing at all." So they must alternate; breathe in, the long hours before the Blessed Sacrament; breathe out, the daily work; so, too, they must now work amongst the Arabs in the desert, now in French fields; and now must give over all work to warm themselves anew at the light of the invisible sun. Theirs is the latest contribution to the African apostolate, for they were only founded in 1941, and it is exciting that the continent of Augustine can still astonish us all.

Supreme Court Oversight

EDWARD J. HEFFRON

IN THE Supreme Court decision in the case of *Everson v. Board of Education,* a bare majority of five of the justices upheld the New Jersey law authorizing district boards of education to provide transportation of school children to and from school, including schools other than public schools. Dissenting opinions were written by Justices Rutledge and Jackson, with the concurrence of Justices Frankfurter and Burton.

The dissenting justices found fault with the statute because it authorized the use of public monies for provision of transportation to and from religious schools. They argued that this broke down the wall, or at least inserted an entering wedge in the wall, which separates church and state; that providing transportation to and from religious schools was supporting religion, and that it therefore involved the use of public monies for a private purpose rather than a public purpose; that as a consequence the statute violated the "due process" clause of the Fourteenth Amendment as well as the First Amendment, made applicable to the states by the Fourteenth.

It is my belief that the dissenting justices inadvertently overlooked what should have been a controlling consideration; i.e., the effect upon the case at bar of New Jersey's compulsory education law. I do not think that even the majority, who gave it only passing mention, attached sufficient weight to it. I feel further that inasmuch as a large body of secular editorial opinion has agreed with the dissenting minority, this omission has been very mischievous.

I shall make my point very quickly by quoting from Justice Rutledge's dissent. He wrote: "An appropriation from the public treasury to pay the cost of transportation to Sunday school, to weekday special classes at the church or parish house, or to the meetings of various young people's religious societies, such as the Y.M.C.A, the Y.W.C.A., the Y.M.H.A., the Epworth League, could not withstand the constitutional attack." I submit that if the state had a compulsory Y.M.C.A. attendance law, as it has a compulsory school attendance law, it should be able to pay the cost of transportation to Y.M.C.A. meetings; and so also with all the other meetings the Justice enumerates. In other words, if it's constitutional for the state to compel attendance, it should be constitutional for the state to facilitate the attendance it compels.

So much for a quick summary of my argument; but a longer look at the question would seem to be warranted. First, let us consider the parent whose conscience is not satisfied by public school instruction, and his reasons.

It has been said that there is a Catholic way of teaching the alphabet. I don't understand that, but I do understand that there is a Catholic way, a religious way, of teaching many subjects of essential importance. In History one writer may be partial to Elizabeth, another to Mary, while a third may adopt a totally economic interpretation of history and discount all religious influences. In Civics a good deal will depend on the construction the writer or teacher places on that wonderful catch-phrase, "all men are created equal . . . they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights."

Doctrinal instruction apart, therefore, the thoughtful religious parent is entitled to some concern about the education of his child, whether it is to be Catholic or Protestant, religious or secular. It is folly to think that the secular instruction can be completely separated from religious consideration, affirmative or negative, explicit or implicit, and made acceptable to the adherents of all religions and of none. That many people do entertain this notion is demonstrated by the number of conscientious parents who are fully content with the public schools; but an increasing proportion of them is learning that all the secular subjects cannot be taught in a completely neutral manner.

Of course the religious parent wants his children to be cultivated, to be able to read and write and figure, to know the history and the culture of their world. But he believes that this can be done in a way to strengthen rather than undermine their faith. "For what does it profit a man if he gain the whole world but suffer the loss of his own soul?"

This brings us to our second point; i.e., that such scruples as these, not being contrary to public morality and good order, are considered in American jurisprudence to lie in the area of private conscience beyond any invasion by the state. In the case of *Pierce v. Society of Sisters,* the Supreme Court held that the state could not compel attendance at public schools, that parents must

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be allowed to send their children to religious schools if they so desired. The Court said: "The child is not the mere creature of the state; those who nurture him and direct his destiny [i.e., parents and guardians] have the right coupled with *the high duty,* to recognize and prepare him for additional [i.e., I submit, religious] obligations."

The *Pierce* case, as the Court was at pains to state, did not invalidate legitimate compulsory education laws. Hence its effect was to declare that religious schools, provided only that they meet the appropriate standards prescribed by the state, do in fact satisfy the requirements of such laws and fulfil their purpose. And the purpose of compulsory education laws is a "public purpose"; as both majority and minority said in the *Everson* case, "it is much too late to argue that legislation intended to facilitate the opportunity of children to get a secular education serves no public purpose."

The conclusion is inescapable that religious schools which fulfil "the secular educational requirements which the state has the power to impose," as the majority in the *Everson* case expressed it, do fulfil a public purpose. Hence the New Jersey statute could not be held in violation of the due process clause of the Fourteenth Amendment as authorizing the use of public monies for a private, rather than a public, purpose.

Justice Rutledge argued against such a conclusion as follows: "To say that New Jersey's appropriation and her use of the power of taxation for raising the fund appropriated . . . are for public purposes is to say that they are not for religious ones." His assumption that religious schools cannot serve a public and a private purpose at the same time is manifestly contrary to the facts and to the holding in the *Pierce* case—which, incidentally, he cites with approval.

At another point in his dissent, Justice Rutledge says: "Commingling the religious with the secular teaching does not divest the whole of its religious permeation and emphasis or make them of minor part." But neither do they destroy the secular. Instruction in the secular branches of learning is an integral part of the curriculum of religious primary and secondary schools; it is not something superadded by some person's whim or contrivance to secure free bus rides for the students. It is there because the parents who send their children to these schools want it there; historically it was there before the state began providing bus transportation and even before the state began providing public schools; and if it weren't there, the schools would not be the kind of schools the Court is talking about, they would be some kind of exclusively catechetical seminaries and they wouldn't qualify under the *Pierce* doctrine, they wouldn't satisfy compulsory education laws, they wouldn't be accorded free or reimbursed bus transportation in the first place, and hence they wouldn't be before the Court.

So the appeal to the due process clause must fail. But it is upon the First Amendment (as imported into the Fourteenth) that the dissenting justices place their greatest reliance. They point out that in so far as the state aids or supports religious schools, it is aiding or supporting religion. Indirectly, of course, this is true. The state, in aid of the secular content of the religious school's curriculum, indisputably aids the school; thus it indirectly aids the religion that is taught in the school. But if *all* state aid to religion is unconstitutional, whether it be direct or indirect, affirmative or negative, then it is unconstitutional for the state to exempt churches (and religious schools) from taxation; it is unconstitutional to connect religious institutions with public sewage systems or to give them fire protection, free of charge; it is unconstitutional for the federal government to pay and maintain chaplains in the armed forces and to erect and maintain service chapels; it is unconstitutional for the Senate and the House to appoint and pay their respective chaplains; it is unconstitutional for the federal government to employ religious in hospitals.

In the *Everson* case, the State of New Jersey did not seek to aid religion. Any aid enjoyed by religion was only by way of an inseparable concomitant to the aid New Jersey sought to render to secular education, which we have seen is clearly a public purpose and therefore a legitimate beneficiary of public tax funds. But the chaplaincies maintained in the armed services and in the House and Senate, at government expense, have no purpose other than a religious purpose.

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If all of these long-established things are unconstitutional, the Supreme Court should be prepared to strike them down. One wonders if it would, if even the dissenting justices would be prepared to do such violence to our traditions. If not, one can only be baffled by their alarm over the fact that, in furthering a legitimate public purpose, the State of New Jersey has indirectly furthered a private or religious purpose; *a fortiori,* since the aid given by the state to its citizens is designed to assist them in obeying one of its own statutory compulsions.

Which raises the question: Does the state compel those citizens to whose consciences *a*-religious education is insufficient and repugnant, to send their children to religious schools? I submit that it does. Putting the question in another way, the answer is a little easier to arrive at; i.e., Are the children in religious schools, as well as those in public schools, bound by compulsory education laws? Anyone who questions the affirmative answer has only to ask the truant officer whether

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he has any legal concern about the students in parochial schools, and where he takes them when he finds them truant.

That is the quick answer; but it doesn't precisely go to the roots of the question. For that, let us consider the fact that the state professes to respect the consciences of those parents who are not satisfied with exclusively secular education; that it tells them, as it must under the *Pierce* doctrine, that it will not compel them to send their children to public schools. But this must mean either that the children of such parents are unaffected by compulsory education laws, that they may stay at home, unschooled, or else that they *must* be sent to other schools. The only practicable alternative which remains is that these parents must fulfil the compulsory education laws as well as any other parents, that they must send their children to such schools as meet, simultaneously, "the secular educational requirements which the state has the power to impose" and the requirements of their own consciences. Of course the state does not tell any given parent that he must send his child to a religious school any more than it tells any given parent that he must send his child to a public school. But it tells all parents that they must send their children to schools which meet its standards of secular instruction, and for purposes of this edict religious schools which meet those standards stand on identically the same footing as public schools.

Justice Jackson, in his dissenting opinion, wrote: "to render tax aid to [a] church school is indistinguishable to me from rendering the same aid to the church itself. . . . The state cannot maintain a church and it can no more tax its citizens to furnish free carriage to those who attend a church." But as Justice Rutledge said, "Compulsory attendance upon religious exercises went out early in the process of separating church and state." If it had not, if the state still had compulsory church attendance laws—as it does have compulsory school attendance laws—it could not only furnish free carriage to church but maintain churches. For those whose consciences were satisfied, in the matter of divine worship, with an unrevealed, non-theological, human kind of religion, it might provide an "ethical culture" sort of church. In the narrower sense of the word, this would be rather an *a*-religious kind of church. If only it were called the "public church" it would be about as analogous to the public school as one could make it. Now if the state furnished free transportation to this church, it is clear that it would not be giving equal protection of the law to all citizens unless it also furnished free transportation to the Methodist, Baptist and Presbyterian churches, in fact to all lawful churches.

Justice Jackson makes an observation which some of the justices might well ponder, in order to assure themselves that their consideration of the constitutional questions involved has not been unconsciously colored by the very point he makes. He says: "Our public school, if not a product of Protestantism, at least is more consistent with it than with the Catholic culture and scheme of values." It hardly seems fair to take further advantage of this observation, except frankly as a debating point, but free carriage to schools which are consistent with, and admittedly products of, Catholicism, involves a religious question which would seem to differ only in degree, if at all, from free carriage to schools which are consistent with, and possibly products of, Protestantism.

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All citizens believe in that minimum of secular education essential to good citizenship. Some citizens—not all of them Catholics, by any means—believe, in conscience, that it cannot properly be imparted except as an integrated part of a fully rounded curriculum which takes cognizance of the facts noted in that basic charter of our liberties, the Declaration of Independence, "that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights," that it is proper for men to appeal "to the Supreme Judge of the world for the rectitude of [their] intentions" and to place "a firm reliance on the protection of Divine Providence," and of the further and necessarily consequent fact that man has definite obligations and responsibilities to his Creator and Supreme Judge. Other citizens believe, in conscience, that all secular subjects can be isolated, properly and without loss, from such a religious context, or else they do not trouble their consciences about the matter at all.

The state already takes tax monies from the former to provide schools suitable only for the latter. If it is unwilling to take tax monies from all for schools suitable for all, it ought either to provide schools for the former and remit the educational taxes of the latter, or provide schools for the latter and remit the educational taxes of the former. But since the states have not seen fit to do this, and since the *Pierce* case has already validated the theoretical dichotomy between secular and religious instruction in religious schools, there would seem to be no valid constitutional reason why the states should not encourage secular instruction in the religious schools, if they wish, as well as in the *a*-religious schools. There is no more reason why it should use tax money to convenience one legal kind of conscience than to convenience another legal kind of conscience—unless, that is, it means to make one the "official" conscience. I wonder if it would not be just as much a violation of the First Amendment (or of the Fourteenth) to "establish" the *a*-religious or indifferentist conscience as to establish the Episcopalian or the Lutheran or the Catholic conscience.

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London Commentary

J. L. BENVENISTI

WE HAVE JUST witnessed over here, though few have noticed it, one of those rare and superb pieces of dramatic effect by which reality sometimes outbids the dramatist at his own craft. We have had, as you have doubtless read, a three-day debate in the House of Commons on the country's economic situation, during which pretty well everything was said except the one thing that really matters, and that was hardly touched on at all. Then on the morning of the last day, the *Times* got up and said that one thing. It did not say it particularly loudly or eloquently, and it was this restrained and almost casual tone that provided the dramatic contrast to which I refer. After all the hullabaloo, the swinging periods and perorations, the *Times* got up and spoke with the voice of a somewhat tired and tetchy professor. And what the *Times* told us was that we were ruined.

The article in question was the first of two so-called "special articles" which dealt with the balance of payments, and established, with a wealth of reasoning, that in all probability we shall have exhausted the Canadian and American loans not, as is generally assumed, round about 1950, but in little more than twelve months from now. They also showed that thenceforward the maintenance even of our present restricted standard of life would involve us in an adverse balance of several hundred million pounds, so that if we are to remain solvent we shall probably have to reduce our food and tobacco imports by anything up to 50 percent, and that of course in its turn means that we shall starve. It is true that the writer's estimate is concerned first and foremost with short run prospects, which have admittedly been worsened by our recent industrial shutdown, but he speaks of the "years (plural) immediately following the exhaustion of the dollar credits," and it is quite clear that he expects no sensational improvement in our position before the repayments of the American loan fall due.

Now, although this article appeared on the Wednesday morning, on the morning, that is to say, of the last day of the great debate, and although it was about as relevant to the issue as it was possible for anything to be, yet not a single speaker in that debate made any allusion to it. It is, of course, true that on the Wednesday morning only the first article had appeared and that the full conclusions were not drawn in the *Times* till the following day. But even that first article showed that the deficit estimated for 1947 would in all probability not be 350 million pounds, as had been forecast in the White Paper, but more than 600 million pounds, and that the loans would be in sight of exhaustion by the end of the year. One would have thought that a statement of that kind, made by the country's highest journalistic authority, might have been found worthy of a word or two of comment. But it was not, and for aught I know the country's affairs may continue to be discussed on the platform, in the press and across the dinner table, just as though those two damning articles had never appeared.

All this strikes me as being very significant, for it is symptomatic of the fact to which I have so often alluded of late—I mean the fact that there is an enormous gap between the level at which the business of a country's politics and government is carried on and the level of its best critical thought and writing. But the thing goes even further, and there is a more serious implication.

To drive home the point I am about to make, I must first impress on the reader the profound mediocrity of my own intelligence. Yet the broad conclusions reached by the *Times* are wholly in line with what I have been stating in THE COMMONWEAL for the past three years.

During all that time I have been saying that Britain, in the conditions that would inevitably obtain after the war, could never adequately offset the loss of her overseas investments by an increase in her export trade, and that any arrangements which assumed her ability not only to do so but to honor new commitments on top of that were the arrangements of a madhouse. I said further that even if there were a remote possibility of Britain doing any of these things, the Bretton Woods agreement disposed of that possibility finally and for good. I said this by implication, even if not in so many words, and I wrote as I did because I took the trouble, which was not very considerable, to go to expert sources for my information, as any person of average intelligence could have done in my place.

Now, there are many harsh and unkind things that could be said about the people who govern us, but one thing nobody would dream of saying. Nobody would dream of saying that Attlee, Cripps, Morrison and company are harebrained, half-witted people. Nobody would say that Sir Stafford Cripps is an illiterate, incapable of reading a newspaper, or, for that matter, a statistical digest. And what is more, nobody would say that expert information has not been available to these gentlemen.

In Britain we do not have the superb statistical services that are available to the Federal Government of the United States. But we do have quite adequate statistical services. We have highly expert economic advisers in the various government departments, and particularly at the Treasury. If the present government has run the ship onto the rocks, they cannot plead that nobody has supplied them with charts or a compass.

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There is only one conclusion to be drawn. It is that our government knew perfectly well what they were doing. They have been governing by bluff and humbug. They were supplied with the facts, but they ignored those facts because, for a variety of reasons, it was imprudent to face up to them.

Lest, however, it be said that I am merely attacking the government of my own country, let me stress again that what underlies this policy of bluff and humbug is that it must, of necessity, dovetail into the corresponding bluff and humbug carried on in America, and in this particular it is America that has been calling the tune.

The thing I am leading up to is, obviously, the conditions of the American Loan, and the prospects of our ever being able to honor them. It is possible that the *Times's* article will have by now caused certain reverberations in the American press, and that somebody will have drawn the obvious conclusion that the British debt is a pretty poor risk. I have therefore made up my mind to make a statement here which I make on very high authority indeed, though I cannot very well quote that authority. It is a statement the tenor of which could long have been read between the lines of what I have written in these pages, but which I now make explicitly for the first time. The statement is as follows.

1. *There is not the faintest chance of Britain honoring her obligations under the American Loan agreement.*

2. *The fact that Britain could never repay the loan was perfectly well known to both the British and the American negotiators.*

3. *The whole of the loan arrangements were dishonestly entered into on both sides because it was believed on the one side that this was the only politically possible way of accomplishing an object which was in itself economically and strategically necessary (namely the bolstering up of Britain's economic and military power), and on the other, that this was the only way to avoid national bankruptcy and international eclipse.*

I have naturally been hesitant in setting down the truth as baldly as this, and I know perfectly well that I shall be criticized for doing it. I shall be told that the whole situation is a very delicate one, calling for extreme finesse, that a certain subtlety is necessary to achieve objects on which the existence of this country depends. Well, the happy condition of secure affluence to which subtlety and finesse have brought us are open for all to see. We are within a hair's breadth of disaster, and according to latest reports our present conditions of grossly inadequate diet may soon give way to those of actual famine. Really, we could not have been much worse off if everybody had been honest all the time.

It is perfectly obvious that in the very near future the whole of the financial arrangements existing between our two countries will have to be revised. May I therefore make the following plea to any Americans who are in a position in any way to influence political action.

1. Make up your minds clearly and calmly whether it is or is not in America's interest, both on economic and strategic grounds, to keep Britain strong and prosperous.

2. If you decide in the affirmative, do what has to be done on a reasonable and realistic basis after getting the best advice obtainable from the economic experts of both countries. Choose a plan that can be carried out, and avoid choosing any other.

3. If your decision hangs in any way in the balance, let considerations of justice and common decency have some weight.

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Britain's position, with her industries and her densely packed population, is economically and demographically justifiable so long as she has the great hinterland of Europe behind her. When half of that is torn away, as the war has torn it, she must either have recourse to some sort of artificial support or more or less go out of business as a nation. There is nothing dishonorable in this position.

You forget that, when you speak of Britain, and especially do you forget it when you speak of the blessings of multilateral trading, on which you insist. Of course, you are right in principle in saying that multilateral trading is a desirable thing. But you forget that we can no longer trade with you on terms of equality, that we come into this business with our greatest markets already destroyed by war. You forget that the very fact that we start with this handicap makes it more difficult for us to accumulate capital and that for this reason our competitive power must inevitably weaken as yours augments, and this turns all talk of healthy and stimulating competition into an irrelevancy. You forget all that, I say, and are now coming along and in the name of fair trading insisting on your right to take from us, as you probably can, the little that remains.

We still have some investments left, though to what extent these can be realized I am unable to say. Perhaps, by means of this unequal struggle, you will force us into parting with these. In that case, we could stave off for a little longer our ultimate annihilation, but we could not prevent it. As long as the Bretton Woods agreement stands, as long as you force us to abandon our system of bilateral agreements by which our necessity to buy from others becomes our chief strength instead of, as now, our chief weakness, for so long our ruin remains inevitable.

I believe that I can make my appeal to Amer-

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icans to have these matters set right, on grounds of pure self-interest, but I also believe that I can appeal on other grounds. I believe that at least something of all that we said during the war was true and sincere. I cannot believe that Americans will knowingly and deliberately engage in such a shabby business, and, under the guise of bringing him succor, set about the despoiling of a wounded friend.

Communications

FEDERAL AID TO EDUCATION

Saginaw, Michigan

TO the Editors: The *Register* (March 30, 1947) comments editorially (in terms characteristic of one of the leading exemplars of the "popular Catholic press") on the position taken by THE COMMONWEAL in relation to the Taft Bill for federal aid to education, and to other matters.

We are told, petulantly, that: "Such publications have their place in the Catholic scheme of life, but THE COMMONWEAL unfortunately gets national publicity when it breaks away from the overwhelming Catholic trend of opinion."

No one would seek to deny the *Register* the right to express its views on any subject, but it should not, I think, be presumptuous to insist that it be guided by some reasonable concern for the American concept of a free press and that it eschew material fallacies generally and particularly *quasi argumentum ad hominem;* and, I am bound to say that any attempt on its part, however implicitly or explicitly implemented, to speak *ex cathedra* in relation to matters well outside the appropriately attenuated area of dogma; any implication that a disability automatically comes into being when one seeks to express or publish a view counter to the "trend of opinion" which it, of course, assumes the ostensible vested right modestly to define, demonstrate an annoying unilateralism and a semantic enervation and decline in the basic meaning of the concept of a free press.

I should argue that if the position of THE COMMONWEAL, when it states that Catholics should be "first of all concerned for the general social good" is regarded by the *Register* as "childish," that it in turn must be classified, in so far as the instant premises are concerned, as a votary of an incredibly infantile ultramontanism. One does hope that he will not be regarded as banal when he observes that after all this is America.

The *Register* concludes with expansive liberality: "Let us close by again asserting that we have no objection to the existence of such publications as THE COMMONWEAL. They should not, however, be taken as voicing official opinions, except when these statements can be proved to be in line with ecclesiastical programs and teachings."

I was not aware that THE COMMONWEAL regards itself as an organ of "official opinion"; one is certain, however, that if one sought such an opinion he would not have recourse to the *Register*.

Publications, like individuals, suffer tangential syndromes and particularly so when they seek to criticize media of recognized distinction among which THE COMMONWEAL is *facile princeps*.

ALFRED N. SLAGGERT.

McMinnville, Oregon

TO the Editors: The Rev. William E. McManus has taken exception to the editorials in THE COMMONWEAL on the Taft Bill for federal support of education. A lifetime of work in public schools may possibly have prepared me for reporting on the situation as presented to me by various sections of the Catholic press.

Senator Morse has already correctly represented us in Oregon as favoring federal support to all schools. THE COMMONWEAL correctly reports that our chances for getting this at this time are slight. This is just a practical political fact. Therefore we must look to long-range planning for an all-inclusive federal bill when the "climate" is favorable.

I was a biology teacher. When I first entered the Church, as a convert, I found my profession depicted in a "Catholic" publication. The individual "secular" biology teacher in the cartoon was a rather poorly drawn caricature of the devil—complete with horns. I happened to know, from previous study, that the editors of such sheets had no official reason for such a cartoon, that the production was a personal idea of theirs, and immediately contradicted by the fact that many of our public school biology teachers and professors belong to the Catholic Church.

Nevertheless, in working for the passage of an all-inclusive federal bill for education, I would send out editorials from THE COMMONWEAL, and I would not send, and did not send, the cartoons from another publication here which cost ten cents. I have spent twenty cents so far on that publication, not realizing the higher value of the new candy bars which I could have bought.

We get what we send. If we attack every effort to help public school teachers, and there have been specific attacks by specific Catholics, then we can expect in return only the mildest support for federal assistance to parochial schools.

If we can build up a reputation for helping all education, then, and only then, can we get a federal bill passed, in America, that will help all schools. Of course, individuals in public school work oppose, in some instances, anything but public schools. People in various towns oppose, also, any state funds that will help anything but their own towns. But there are broader-gauged educators in public schools everywhere who are interested in education, and there are so many of them that we do not need to alienate them by constantly attacking all non-Catholic educators. Because some of our "militant Catholic" papers are the noisiest, we do have, at the moment, a reputation for opposing any effort to help public school teachers. The real task is to circulate such editorials as those in THE COMMONWEAL in order to prove that not all Catholics are opposed to every form of education except their own.

B. H. CARLETON.

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"THE IRON PASTORAL"

Notre Dame, Indiana

TO the Editors: One correction in regard to John Hay's review of "The Iron Pastoral." The style is not "borrowed" from Hopkins; it has nothing of his highly individual diction ("lovely-dumb," "very-violet-sweet," "roundy," "branchy," "dapple-dawn-drawn"); nothing of his much-discussed sprung rhythm. If anything, it is in reaction against what I take to be Hopkins's literary excesses. Anyone wanting to know where I "borrowed" the style will have to look elsewhere.

JOHN FREDERICK NIMS.

"THE STRUGGLE FOR FREEDOM"

Washington, D. C.

TO the Editors: Dr. Kiniery ought to be asked to document the dismal conclusions which he borrows from Dr. Sterling Edwards in his review of the latter's book, "The Struggle for Freedom" (March 28th). If I understand Dr. Kiniery correctly, he is telling us—and rather patronizingly, by the way—that the apathetic American electorate has sold its birthright for a mess of New Deal pottage. If so, it ought to follow logically, I suppose, that things have recently taken a decided turn for the better. For, believe me, the bureaucrats are on the run in Washington. On the very day that I read Dr. Kiniery's review, I also read in the daily papers that the House of Representatives had ruthlessly slashed the budget of the Department of Labor, the National Labor Relations Board, and several other administrative boards and agencies which "rather than courts of law now direct the lives of American people." And the defenders of the Constitution have only begun to fight! Give them another year and they will have demonstrated conclusively to the chastened bureaucrats that it doesn't pay to trifle with the liberties of the American people.

This could go on forever. Suffice it to say that Edmunds sounds a lot like Hayek and that, Dr. Kiniery to the contrary notwithstanding, there *are* some "objective persons" (present company excluded) who "will question" his conclusions. As a matter of fact, I strongly suspect that the editors of THE COMMONWEAL will question many of his conclusions very pointedly.

The Reverend GEORGE G. HIGGINS.

The Stage & Screen

The Whole World Over

THELMA SCHNEE'S adaptation of this Soviet comedy by Konstantine Simonov has been earning such epithets as pleasant, affable, agreeable, etc., in the news. However, I am afraid *empty* will be the only term I can add to this list of adjusted laurels. There is little question certainly that anyone will be politically, or any way socially, riled by this small saga of a female engineer's discovery of the RIGHT MAN, but I do think there is some question of being bored in the process. A number of actors,

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plus Joseph Buloff, do very well by the business, but this again raises a couple of questions. One will be why, in foreign comedies of this slight dimension, there should have to be such a variety of accents on the stage. Is a podge of different dictions really necessary in order to delineate foreignness on our stage? Or would it not be more astute to direct a cast of actors in the way of business, gesture, and demeanor, so that the essential contrasts (customs, costumes, tempi) between peoples could be inherently grasped. Our native actors seem nowadays to have no vocabulary of dialects, certainly none of styles; or, if they have, are rarely given the chance to display such ability.

My second question concerns Mr. Buloff who, as everyone knows, is a great and endearing comic. Here, however, and I'm sure through no fault of his own, he is over-starred. He seems to have two audiences, one on stage as well as in the house. Everyone hangs on his entrances, everyone is grouped and moved so as to point him implacably. Quite honestly, I can't feel he needs all this amount of hush-hush. It isn't necessary to him. In more ways than one, Harold Clurman's direction is a mistaken job. (*At the Biltmore.*)

Barefoot Boy With Cheek

IN SPITE of a ten-line credit list and a cast of twenty, George Abbott's new college musical can only go down as an arrangement in *pure youth*. Pure youth means exactly that. It has got nothing to do with wit, invention, airs and graces, words and tunes, or an idea. It seems to me that most people are either too old or too young to be interested in paying for this especial commodity, but perhaps I am wrong and some may find it "affable," "agreeable," and "pleasant." I must also except Nancy Walker as the only evidence of talent in the midst of the teeming teens. (*At the Martin Beck.*)

Tenting Tonight

JOHN ROOT'S neat, psychologically right, setting will be the only excuse for this wearing, clamorous evening devoted to the G.I. campus housing mess. (*At the Booth.*)

KAPPO PHELAN.

Drama—and Keep It Melo

THE STUDIOS seem to have decided that what we need, along with a spring tonic, is a good dose of melodrama, so they give us the works ranging from embroidered romance, to sultry murder, to fast action in which animals show that they are maligned when men call them dumb creatures.

"Time Out of Mind," based on Rachel Field's novel about sea-farers, musicians and domesticated females in nineteenth century New England, is another of those "women's-pictures" which throw men for a loop. In the first place I could not understand why the heroine (although she is portrayed extremely well by Phyllis Calvert) was so devoted to the son of the house in which she works. Robert Hutton is as colorless as possible as this sad young man who wants to be a composer in spite of the wishes of his stern father (Leo G. Carroll) who thinks he should go to sea. The story is mainly concerned with how Miss Calvert gets her man, a complicated and tedious process that also involves Ella Raines as the sister whose interest in her brother is rather heavy, Helena Carter as the wealthy, pretty girl who gets him first and has to be disposed of through divorce, Eddie Albert as a simple fisherman who loves the heroine, and many others including a music critic who thinks the composer's symphony is wonderful. The clichés in this story and the unbelievable dialogue were not helped by the direction of Robert Siodmak who usually knows how to make exciting cinema. Feminine audiences may like it anyway, just to watch the heroine suffer and fight for her man.

However, if you really want to watch a woman suffer and fight *against* her man, *"The Two Mrs. Carrolls"* is your dish. Thomas Job's script, based on the play by Martin Vale, lets us know what's what in this tale of violence, so there's no element of mystery; but there's a lot of suspense and we pull hard for the present Mrs. Carroll when she finally discovers that her husband poisoned his first wife and is now giving her the same treatment. Barbara Stanwyck plays the rôle with a great deal of convincing anguish, and Alexis Smith is properly mean as the sophisticated dame who for some strange reason wants to be the third Mrs. Carroll. I found it rather difficult to accept Humphrey Bogart as an artist of great talent or as a romantic figures whom women couldn't resist. As a murderer he is properly scary. A rôle not in the play but added very effectively to the film is unusually well handled by little Ann Carter. As Mr. Carroll's precocious daughter she adds another note of things not being quite right around this house. Director Peter Godfrey builds up the suspense until you get as jittery as the waning Mrs. Carroll.

"Johnny O'Clock," which gives Dick Powell another hard-boiled rôle, has also been directed with a slow, careful build-up. Director Robert Rossen slips us plenty of details and rough talk about the intricacies of running a gambling casino before the big climax which vibrates with tension. Powell, as one of the bosses of the place, is suspected when the checkroom girl (Nina Foch) is murdered. This girl's sister (Evelyn Keyes) arrives on the scene and provides an opportunity for Dick to show that he's not entirely without conscience. Lee Cobb, as the police inspector, lends further authenticity to this who-dun-it which is definitely above run-of-the-mill mysteries.

Or if you prefer a more healthy, outdoor note to your drama, you might consider *"Stallion Road"* which allows a time-worn triangular romance to run its course before a stunning background of horse-raising in Southern California. The plot, involving Ronald Reagan and Alexis Smith as horsey folk, and Zachary Scott as a novelist friend, is pretty banal; but James V. Kern's direction has enough action to hold your interest; and the setting and horses manage to convey a feeling of goodwill and glowing spirits that rise above man's pettiness. Horse-lovers will, of course, lap the whole thing up; unbiased moviegoers may expect more intelligence in a story.

Audiences who just want to have a good time can hurry

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right over to the new Tarzan item. It is one of the best in the series. Johnny Weissmuller may seem to be getting a little paunchy; but Producer Sol Lesser and Director Kurt Neumann wisely devoted plenty of footage to the animals who are displayed in handsome style in *"Tarzan and the Huntress."* So no one is really disappointed. Tarzan swims, swings from trees and yahoos to the elephants at the proper time—and do those big lugs charge to the rescue! Also in the trees are Jane (Brenda Joyce) and Boy (Johnny Sheffield who can't be called "Boy" much longer for he's big enough to take Tarzan's place at any moment). Without half trying, Cheta, the chimp, steals the show.

PHILIP T. HARTUNG.

Books of the Week

Great Adventures and Explorations. Edited by Vilhjalmur Stefansson, with the collaboration of Olive Rathbun Wilcox. Dial. $5.00.

VILHJALMUR STEFANSSON is written down as "editor" of this 788-page history of discovery, and Olive Rathbun Wilcox receives credit as his collaborator. The bulk of the book is source material taken from the writings of the adventurers and explorers themselves, and of their companions—dozens of different men of various nations and centuries and various rhetorical traditions. Nonetheless, the volume is strongly Stefanssonian in tone, atmosphere, opinion, and style itself. In the field of exploration, no one could give the work greater prestige.

The job of the editors and compilers is a big one and excellently performed. The history is made up of eighteen parts, each one covering one of the principal geographical objectives of exploration, or one of the spectacular individual travels. Stefansson's explanations and comments connect the original narratives, introduce the old writers, and explain elements that would be obscure without his guidance.

In these connectives and explanations and also in some of the translation, the editor gives the whole work much of his own strong personality and his own enthusiasms. There is his down-to-earth scientific approach, which, although mostly effective and persuasively reasonable, seems in intermittent danger of narrowing to a now archaic extreme of rationalism. Somehow, one gets the feeling that Francis Bacon might be one of Stefansson's new and exciting discoveries, and that the Eighteenth Century Encyclopedists, modernized by laboratories and physical reports, are the academy he most honors. Many of the recurring themes of his work, here as elsewhere, are nearly all such as reduce experience toward the matter-of-course and restrict significance toward the tangible and ordinary. He is anti-dramatic in modesty, and apparently in principle. He excludes, for instance, his own Arctic triumphs from this work. (His own books, like the wonderful "Friendly Arctic," achieve their attraction and force by a special "plain" quality.) He admires Peary vastly, but for different reasons, one gathers after reading the splendid Peary passage, than Peary seems to have admired himself. He does not present the personal excitement and drama of the people whose scientific labors he admires and highly evaluates. He infuses in the reader a new interest in his branch of science, but he does not develop the more rounded philosophical and cultural

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Why oppose Communist control of Greece and Turkey and then help Stalin take over Italy? Who controls Italy controls the Mediterranean. The proposed treaty dictates that Italy must demolish all fortifications and naval defense facing Tito's Yugoslavia—actually places Tito's troops over Italians on Italian soil. It gives Russia control of Italian industry.

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meanings and positions and effects of his adventurers and explorers. He deletes from sources "religious interpretation and philosophical speculation," because that is the kind of book this is, and because that is the kind of book he is interested in producing.

One factor emphasized in this history which is more psychological and speculative and less tangible than most, is the influence of the theory of "zones" of the sphere (it became established in the West in 200 BC or 300 BC and was still somewhat effective with Columbus) which made the tropics and the polar regions impossible for man to cross. There is much of Stefansson's fascinating consideration of food and nutrition and its governing rôle in discovery. The high and unusual credit he gives—it seems almost consciously not making a point of it—to early and primitive societies pervades this book. Of course, stone age navigators conquered the greatest ocean, the Pacific, picking out those tiny islands; and the Eskimos were the teachers of polar travel and feeding and living; and the old Irish could sail about anywhere in their skin and stick boats. The north connection between Europe and America, via Iceland and Greenland, is carried back in completely convincing manner to make of Columbus a Johnny-come-lately. The Norse ancestors of the editor seem perceptibly more appreciated than the men of Latin Europe.

The original accounts given in "Great Adventures and Explorations" will delight anyone already interested in this field of literature, and many others who could find few better introductions to it. There are wonderful stories and amazing accomplishments told with flavor by the men who went through the experiences. Many of the tales have not much currency in this country in any other form. The Arctic and Antarctic are handled, perhaps, most magisterially (as they should be, indeed), but his own taste and previous reading, or lack of it, will determine the reader's particular principal interests. The story of Magellan by Antonio Pigafetta, the account of Vasco da Gama's voyage to the East, and Friar Gaspar de Carvajal's description of Orellana's Amazonian exploration even more than balance the remarkable number of accounts of the efforts made in the frigid zones by seekers for the northern passages, east and west, and for the poles. The world is well explored in this large and handsome volume. The maps of Richard Edes Harrison add much to the looks and help much in following the men, but a close reading urges still further to some atlas of all the continents and seas.

PHILIP BURNHAM.

Before I Go Hence. Frank Baker. Coward-McCann. $2.75.

IN FRANK BAKER'S latest novel, subtitled "fantasia on a novel," there is much to charm, much to keep the reader reading to the end. There are two themes centered around the old Sussex farmhouse, Allways. A retired Cornish clergyman, Fenner Doble lives there, in 1930, with his embittered, waspish daughter, Ellen, and a feeble-witted, grown son, Arthur. His elder son, Robert, has left home twenty-four years before the story opens. Enter second theme, 1943; a novelist, Maurice Hilliar and his wife, Ruth, both very much in love, make an expedition to Allways, accompanied by a friend, Richard, who is anxious for Maurice to see the now abandoned farmhouse about which there is much mystery and "at-

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mosphere." Maurice falls under the spell of Allways and wants to write a novel about it. Only a few facts can be gleaned from the local inhabitants. He is tormented all through the book by his consuming desire to write and his inability to produce anything about Allways.

A psychic rapport exists between old Doble and Maurice, but the writer does not dare track down any more information for fear of destroying the delicate germ he is nurturing. Meanwhile, the errant Robert returns to Allways, with fabulous gifts for his family. One of Fenner's gifts is an old French Book of Hours. Upon this little 15th century book hangs the crux of Mr. Baker's novel. Fenner dearly loves this treasure, and writes across the flyleaf his own credo: "Singulariter sum ego donec transean"—"Before I go hence, I am alone." Robert, a handsome boy scout, also builds a tree-house for his father.

Back and forth the two themes weave. Maurice senses certain situations, moods, sensations emanating from Allways; Fenner imagines he sees people he does not know, preaches his final sermon (a good one) on his favorite text. The spiritual entente is woven tighter; Fenner's "Singulariter sum ego" commingling with Maurice's "I'll be loving you always."

According to Webster, a fantasia in its broadest meaning is "a kind of potpourri of familiar airs floridly set with interludes and embellishments." There are many facts and fancies in this novel and they are presented with a certain exhibitionism. Mr. Baker is an unguarded Romantic; his ending is very Rupert Brooke.

As a story, "Before I Go Hence" is intriguing, but it is sheer trickery. Frank Baker can be subtle; he can also write well and easily, but he has never got over his undergraduate days, and, except for the galled Ellen and the serenely spiritual clergyman, he has a lot to learn about people who do *not* at the age of thirty-nine build tree-houses in England, nor is there always honey for tea.

ELIZABETH JOHNSON.

The Rammed-Earth House. Anthony F. Merrill. Harper. $2.50.

THE VERSATILITY of the good earth is emphasized by Anthony Merrill's "The Rammed-Earth House," a combination polemic and how-to-do-it book with a good natured introduction by Secretary of Agriculture Clinton Anderson. Earth in one form or another—brick, tile, adobe—is one of the oldest of building materials, but just plain earth is something of a novelty in the United States, even though we have rammed-earth structures a century old. The process is simple. Any soil with 30 to 70 percent sand and no more than 50 percent silt and clay is suitable. It is thrown between forms on a concrete foundation and tamped until the earth "pings." Move the forms up, put in more soil, tamp, and eventually you will have the walls of your house—solid, durable and, surely, distinctive. Mr. Merrill has collected all the known facts, including the scattered reports of the USDA and of Dr. Patty at the South Dakota Agricultural Experimental Station. The book contains step by step instruction, with illustrations, for building an earth house.

Mr. Merrill is very enthusiastic, but while he has undoubtedly read and synthesized all the literature, I suspect he never rammed a wall. A few years ago several of us, with like enthusiasm, rammed an earth smokehouse,

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completing the project just before Minnesota's famous Armistice Day blizzard. The freezing temperature on the uncured walls caused dire predictions for the project, variously known as the "pounded sod" and "smashed clay" house. They proved unfounded and the building is substantial today. Earth from your own acres is cheap but it takes a lot of work, much more, we thought, than the savings in materials justified; moreover, the walls represent only one-fourth to one-eighth of the cost of a modern house. Finally, Frank Lloyd Wright and the USDA have dropped, at least temporarily, their interest in rammed earth. But who cares for such prosaic objections? Mr. Merrill fires the imagination and makes it clear that one can have a home of his own if he's willing to dig for it. Even if his readers end up by building of monolithic concrete or cinder block, his book will have served its purpose. Anyone who isn't intrigued with the idea of a rammed-earth house deserves to continue to live in his match-box apartment. EMERSON HYNES.

Cuban Counterpoint. Fernando Ortiz. Knopf. $4.00.

THE AUTHOR of this book is a lawyer, diplomat, editor, and sociologist of standing. The Latins, like the English and the French, prefer an author to be a man of learning first and a specialist later. Dr. Ortiz has described the two principal crops of Cuba, sugar and tobacco. He does not give merely a technical analysis of two crops and two processing industries. He gives the facts, legends, ideas, and the contrasting ways of life that have grown up about these two crops. The result is a literary counterpoint which identifies sugar with slavery, machinery, foreign capital and imperialism; tobacco with freedom, small industry, local skills, and political independence.

Dr. Ortiz creates strong images which hold the imagination. American scholars, at a disadvantage in appealing to the feelings, would more easily have avoided the pitfall of judging a complex problem in terms of a literary contrast. In this book, capitalism is personified; feudal is a term of abuse. Dr. Ortiz finds sugar guilty because it provides men with rigid time-bound work, and proletarian dependence, which they do not like. Sociologists and politicians are everywhere making that complaint today of all industrial work. The economist answers that wherever the population is rising men must do work that they do not like. What would Dr. Ortiz do with the men who now work in the sugar industry? Surely he would not want them to crowd into the tobacco fields and the cigar factories.

Should the United States be blamed for introducing alien capital and machine industry, or praised for creating work for men who could not have lived to maturity in a handicraft society? EDNA LONIGAN.

Revolution in Warfare. Liddell Hart. Yale. $2.00.

WITH the exception of the people on whom it was used, the atom bomb would seem to have been most immediately harmful to military historians, most of whom must have found it particularly difficult to get back to work on the morning after Hiroshima. As the author of twenty-seven books, all of which deal, more or less, with the barracks and saddle-soap days of war, Captain Liddell Hart must have been, for trade reasons, quite as discouraged as anyone else by the beastly change in the old cavalry, space/fire science, but with the publication of

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"Revolution in Warfare" the Captain indicates that he, at least, among military historians, is still in business, ready to deal with the probables of big-time destruction. His first effort under the new circumstances is brief (119 pages), but to his disspirited fellow craftsmen it should prove that the adaptable military historian can survive.

Like anyone else who is forced to consider the issue, the Captain puts off, as long as he decently can, a hand-to-hand struggle with the problem of what the world might best do about the atom bomb, and during the first ninety-seven pages of his book he takes a final nostalgic run through the more reasonable periods in the development of Western battle, from the days of the personal buffet right up to the armored division—a farewell salute in which he mentions, by means of a shy footnote, his own contribution to those better days: the influence of his book

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about Sherman on the summer 1944 American breakthrough in Normandy, as avowed by General George Patton. As the Captain sees it now, modern warfare went wrong at about the time of the American Civil War, when several of the most successful Northern generals, ignoring the battle manners of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, developed, in action, the idea that war should be as uncomfortable as possible for everybody. The idea worked, of course, and from that time on Western military thinkers, additionally encouraged by a misunderstanding of Clausewitz and by the tempting abundance and beauty of mechanical gadgets, were off to what frequently appears to be the world's final appointment with total war. Captain Hart hopes, but does not seem entirely certain, that there is a road back. If there is a way, he thinks it is to be found in qualitative disarmament, a universal agreement to withhold the worst things and a return to the contained eighteenth century view of warfare. United Nations, federations—later, perhaps.

JOHN BRODERICK.

Let Me Lie. James Branch Cabell. Farrar, Straus. $3.75.

A COLLECTION of previously published essays on Virginia and Virginians, this is, in every sense, an old book; one hopes that before settling down to his typewriter again Mr. Cabell, who, after all, is not yet seventy, will associate more with young persons, whether they be natives of the Great Commonwealth or elsewhere. Four decades ago, the self-consciousness, the mannered style, the irony, irreverence and iconoclasm of this volume might have offended Virginians and amused their neighbors to north and south, but today it is the tiresome Swan Song of that generation which had as a primary purpose in writing the blasting of tradition and the exhibition of its own shallow cleverness; one notes with amazement that several of the essays appeared in American magazines within the last two years. Particularly offensive in its vulgarity is "General Lee of Virginia." The most appealing chapter, uncouthly entitled "Is of Southern Ladies," concerns colored mammies, and seeks to lay at their doors the faults and the eventual salvation of their Virginia charges: ". . . by her he was taught, from infancy onward, to regard himself as an all-superior person; by her he was spoiled, completely and forever; and by her, as he very well foreknows, he by-and-by is going to be put in his right heavenly place, not unseverely, with an injunction, for the good Lord's sake, to behave himself now, and to let people see his raising."

D. H. MOSELEY.

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